

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7609

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1542

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, INT

SUBJ: THWARTED COUP PLOT

1. MINISTER OF DEFENSE AVEROFF CALLED ME THIS MORNING TO SAY THAT "EVERYTHING IS OVER, " THE COUP PLOT HAS BEEN BROKEN UP. HE SAID THAT EVERYTHING WAS "UNDER CONTROL" IN THE COUNTRY.

2. AVEROFF ELABORATED ON SOME OF THE INFORMATION THAT HE PASSED TO ME LAST NIGHT (ATHENS 1521). HE SAID THAT INFORMATION CONCERNING A PLANNED COUP HAD COME TO HIS AND CARAMANLIS' ATTENTION OVER RECENT DAYS AND THAT AS THEY INVESTIGATED THE MATTER THEY WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY ABOUT "TEN OFFICERS THAT WERE DEFINITELY INVOLVED IN THE PLOT. HE SAID THEY ALSO HAD STRONG SUSPICIONS ABOUT SOME OTHERS. THEREFORE HE AND CARAMANLIS DECIDED TO GO AHEAD AND CALL THE ALERT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND ARREST THE "TEN" KNOWN CONSPIRATORS "PLUS A FEW MORE." HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO TAKEN "OTHER MEASURES" TO ASSURE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER THE SITUATION. HE SAID HE WOULD TALK TO ME MORE ABOUT IT LATER AND THAT SOME OF THE "OTHER MEASURES" WOULD BE KNOWN LATER ON.

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3. AVEROFF WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HOPED SOME OF THE

MORE VOCAL POLITICIANS THAT HAVE BEEN CALLING FOR A MORE RAPID AND THOROUGH GOING PURGE OF THE ARMED FORCES WOULD TAKE HEED FROM WHAT HAS HAPPENED. HE SAID THAT SOME OF THE MOST BLATANT AND IRRESPONSIBLE CALLS BY POLITICIANS FOR "PUNISHMENT" OF THE MILITARY WERE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVOKING THESE "YOUNG OFFICERS" WHO HAD PLANNED THIS COUP ATTEMPT. (COMMENT. I WAS IN AVEROFF'S OFFICE A FEW DAYS AGO WHEN HE WAS PLEADING WITH CENTER UNION/NEW FORCES LEADER GEORGE MAVROS TO CALL OFF ONE OF HIS PARTY STALWARTS IN THE PARLIAMENT WHO WAS ATTACKING THE HELLENIC ARMED FORCES.)

4. AVEROFF INDICATED HE THOUGHT THE BREAKUP OF THIS YOUNG COUP-PLANNING GROUP WOULD RESULT IN SOME RELAXATION OF TENSIONS IN THE MILITITARY. (COMMENT. BUT THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.)
KUBISCH

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